(b) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken up or propose to take up the matter of upkeeping of Gurudwaras in Pakistan with the new regime in Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) Government have received complaints that Sikh religious shrines in Pakistan are not being properly maintained.

Under the India-Pakistan Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines, every effort is to be made to ensure that places of religious worship in the agreed list are properly maintained and their sanctity preserved. Pakistan has not adhered to this sitpulation. It is also Government's view that recent changes made by the Government of Pakistan in the system of administration of Sikh religious shrines in that country constitute an interference in Sikh affairs.

Pope's visit to India

1579. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pope's visit to India has met the objectives envisaged by Government;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the views of Government about the "conversion being a human right assertion made by the Pope"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) The State Visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, as the Head of State of the Vatican, to India from 5-7 November 1999 has contributed to enhancing the international community's understanding of India as a multi-religious, multi-ethnic society committed to the maintenance of secularism. In consonance with the secular traditions of India, the Indian Constitution, provides for the right to freedom of speech and expression subject to reasonable restriction and all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health.